

## **Inclusive Practice Policy**

### **Introduction**

In the context of the University of London International Programmes' strategic vision of life-changing, high quality university education for those who will benefit, and its access mission, the International Programmes welcomes applications from those with specific access requirements. Our aim is to develop a proactive approach to ensure that services are accessible for all, that we respect individual choice and that we create an inclusive environment which recognises the diversity of individuals within a flexible and supportive educational framework.

The International Programmes has many students who choose to study with us because their needs cannot be met elsewhere. Often these needs are related to when and how the applicant is able to study rather than a disability or other special circumstance. Examples include workers on board ships, those based on oil platforms and rigs, and students whose work demands that they travel extensively or who are unable to travel and thus access education through conventional attendance. The International Programmes also has a small population of students who are prisoners, for whom study may be part of an effort to reform, and others interned for political reasons who place a high value on academia.

### **Definitions**

For the purposes of this document the term 'specific access requirements' is interpreted broadly and covers specific access requirements of any applicant, student or graduate, especially in relation to a disability. It therefore applies to those who:

- have a disability or learning difficulty
- have special examination requirements
- are currently in prison
- have legally imposed travel restrictions.

Admission to our programmes is granted strictly on the basis of eligibility and we seek to ensure that our policies do not disadvantage any applicant or student. Programme assessment is primarily through examination, so it is therefore particularly important that we are fully informed of any special examination requirements and establish how we can meet those needs.

In the UK disability is defined as any physical or mental impairment which has a substantial adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and is likely to last more than 12 months.

Disability by this definition includes physical or mobility impairments, visual impairments, hearing impairments, learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia), ADHD, mental health difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions, medical conditions and 'unseen disabilities' (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, heart conditions, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS and multiple sclerosis).

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the International Programmes remains committed to providing access and enabling students with specific access requirements as defined above to achieve a University of London award. The policy aims to comply with current legislative requirements.

### **Scope**

We are committed to providing the appropriate support to enable any student, who meets the academic criteria to cope with the requirements of the course, to have an equal chance of success.

To achieve this the International Programmes:

- recognises that everyone is an individual, and will work with students to identify barriers to studying and make reasonable adjustments to remove them;
- is committed to ensuring wherever possible that no student is disadvantaged in their programme of study by disability or other specific access requirements;
- is committed to developing a culture of inclusion in which people feel comfortable to disclose a disability and to discuss any reasonable adjustments;
- is committed to the development and improvement, as appropriate and possible, of services and procedures;
- is committed to the development of knowledge and understanding of staff to meet the needs of students with a disability and other identified specific access requirements.

This policy therefore relates to four distinct areas: disclosure; admissions and registration; the study experience; and examination arrangements.

## **1. Disclosure**

Educational institutions are expected to make reasonable enquiries to find out whether you have a disability. However, if an institution has made reasonable

attempts to find out but you have chosen not to disclose your disability, the institution cannot be responsible for any failure to make specific individual adjustments. The International Programmes has in place a series of measures which enable an applicant or student to disclose their specific access requirements at the key points of application for admission and examination entry.

Any information provided about a disability or other specific access requirements is likely to be classified as sensitive personal data for the purposes of the Data Protection Act. The International Programmes will treat such information as confidential and will make it available only to those who need to know. Such information is used only to ensure the necessary support and any required adjustments.

Any medical reports provided are strictly confidential and only specific access requirements are communicated.

No information about disability will be disclosed to any third parties without the explicit consent of the student.

## **2. Admissions**

Any applicant to the University of London International Programmes should be confident that their application is considered on the same academic grounds as those from other candidates.

Discussions relating to any special requirements are quite separate from the academic selection processes. Applicants are encouraged to declare their disability or any other specific access requirements on the application form to ensure we can assist the student to make the most of their studies.

A student may declare a disability and/or any specific access requirements to the International Programmes at any time during their studies with the University and if disclosed after enrolment we will endeavour to provide reasonable support from the date of disclosure.

However, late disclosure may limit the extent of any assistance and adjustment we are able to make.

## **3. The Study Experience**

The International Programmes provides introductory study materials for the majority of its undergraduate qualifications. Full distance learning materials and tutorial support are supplied for most postgraduate degrees and diplomas.

Any applicant or student who would like to receive materials in other than the standard printed form is advised to contact the International Programmes' Inclusive Practice Manager. Applicants are strongly encouraged to answer the question on materials in alternative formats on the application form. We strive

to support individual students with disabilities in order to meet their particular needs.

Although the University does not itself provide direct tuition support for International Programmes students, tuition is available from other sources. Students with specific access requirements who would like to receive tuition, as either a full-time or part-time study option, from an institution or to enrol with one offering online support are advised to contact the Inclusive Practice Manager.

The University is not responsible in any way for the management of external institutions which offer tuition for the International Programmes. Students should contact the institution directly in order to find out if their specific needs can be met.

Increasingly the International Programmes are making use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) and improving the accessibility of this element of the study experience is a central element of the Inclusive Practice Policy.

#### **4. Special Examination Arrangements**

The University has procedures in place for considering requests relating to special examinations arrangements. The University will attempt to ensure that a student with specific access requirements is not disadvantaged in examinations compared with other students.

Applicants and students with a requirement for special examination arrangements are advised to contact the University to discuss them. We strongly encourage students to answer the question on special examination arrangements on the application form and in submitting an examination entry.

Examples of the ways in which we have been able to assist students in the past include:

- question papers in Braille;
- large print question papers;
- special seating;
- extra time;
- use of an amanuensis;
- use of a word processor
- breaks during the examination;
- permission to take food into the examination hall.

The requirements of the examination process mean that examinations can take place only in examination centres.

It should be noted that adjustments in examination arrangements are not intended to compromise the qualification itself. The University will not modify the particular academic standard which it applies to determine whether or not students have a particular level of competence or ability.

The University does not charge students an additional fee for the provision of special examination arrangements; however, local examination centres may levy extra fees to cover such services. Disabled students who are residents in the UK may be eligible to apply for a Disabled Student's Allowance (DSA).

Overall, the International Programmes aims to provide an equal opportunity to all students. This policy describes what a student with specific access requirements should consider during their student life cycle and the International Programmes approach.

Although we recognise that everyone is an individual it is not possible to cover individual cases in this document.

This policy will be updated when necessary to reflect any changes to the legislation or any University practices / procedures.

June 2011